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Message Text

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20
ACTION OES-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 AF-08 ISO-00 L-03 EB-07 FEA-01 ERDA-05

AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00 CIEP-01 COME-00 DODE-00 FPC-01

H-02 INR-07 INT-05 NSAE-00 NSC-05 OMB-01 PM-04

USIA-06 SAM-01 SP-02 SS-15 STR-04 TRSE-00 ACDA-07

/110 W
---------- 109189
R 031549Z DEC 76
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7622
INFO AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE
AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 35791

E.O.11652: GDS
TAGS: TECH, ENRG, FR
SUBJECT: US UTILITY PURCHASE OF NATURAL URANIUM FROM URANEX

REF: (A)STATE 273196; (B) PARIS 30931; (C) STATE 144551

1. SUMMARY. EMBOFF DISCUSSED FURTHER WITH GOF OFFICIALS GENERAL ASPECTS OF THIS SUBJECT AND PRESSED FOR SPECIFIC ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS RAISED IN REFTEL A. THE FRENCH CEA FINALLY RESPONDED THAT IT DID NOT WISH TO GIVE FORMAL ANSWERS TO THE QUESTIONS AS IT FELT THIS TOPIC IS ONE OF SEVERAL INVOLVED IN THE URANEX-CPL DISCUSSIONS AND WOULD NOT BE HELPFUL TO DIVORCE THIS TOPIC FROM THE OTHERS. IN THE COURSE OF THE DISCUSSIONS INFORMAL ANSWERS HAVE BEEN DEVELOPED TO THE QUESTIONS RAISED IN REFTEL A.

2. RE REFTEL A, PARA 2, ITEM A: THERE HAS BEEN NO REQUEST FOR GOF APPROVAL TO EXPORT DOMESTICALLY-

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MINED NATURAL URANIUM FROM FRANCE SINCE 1973. IT IS

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A GOVERNMENT (BASED ON PRESIDENTIAL DECISION) POLICY THAT ALL DOMESTIC URANIUM WILL BE RESERVED FOR USE IN FRANCE. INITIALLY DEVELOPED TO PREEMPT COMPLICATIONS WITH ITS PARTNERS IN THE COMMON MARKET, THIS POLICY NOW IS OF BENEFIT TO FRANCE IN HELPING HER MEET HER OWN GROWING ENERGY NEEDS.

3. THE RECENT DISCUSSIONS INDICATE THAT THE DECEMBER 1973 DECREE IS SEPARATE AND DISTINCT FROM THE SPECIFIC GOVERNMENT POLICY OF NOT EXPORTING DOMESTIC FRENCH URANIUM. HOWEVER, BOTH ARE CLOSELY RELATED IN THAT THE DECREE ALL BUT BARS EXPORTS AND IS A PUBLIC STATEMENT OF FRENCH POLICY. THE BAN ON EXPORTS IS NOT SO SPECIFICALLY STATED PUBLICLY. IT IS NOT CLEAR FROM THE DISCUSSIONS WHAT THE GOF PUBLIC RESPONSE WOULD BE IF QUESTIONED ON EXPORTING DOMESTIC FRENCH URANIUM; IT IS ASSUMED THAT ITS RESPONSE WOULD IN EFFECT SAY THAT ALL DOMESTIC FRENCH URANIUM IS SLATED FOR USE IN FRANCE AND IS NOT AVAILABLE FOR EXPORT.

4. EMBOFF, IN DISCUSSING THIS SUBJECT WITH CEA OFFICIALS, INDICATED THAT A SPECIFIC RESPONSE FROM THE GOF WOULD BE HELPFUL. AFTER SOME DAYS OF CONSIDERATION EMBOFF WAS ADVISED THAT THE CEA WOULD PREFER NOT TO BE ASKED TO MAKE A SPECIFIC STATEMENT ON THE MATTER, THAT THIS TOPIC WAS ONE OF SEVERAL INVOLVED IN THE URANEXCPL DISCUSSIONS AND SHOULD NOT BE ADDRESSED SEPARATELY.

5. EMBASSY SCIENCE COUNSELOR WILL BE AVAILABLE TO DISCUSS THIS SUBJECT WITH CPL OFFICIALS OR THEIR LAWYERS SHOULD THEY VISIT PARIS IN REGARD TO THIS MATTER.
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